

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5501

---

---

As of February 19, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to implementing Washington learns.

**Brief Description:** Implementing Washington learns recommendations.

**Sponsors:** Senators McAuliffe, Tom, Marr, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Franklin, Hobbs, Oemig, Weinstein, Kauffman, Rasmussen, Shin, Kilmer and Poulsen; by request of Governor Gregoire.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/29/07.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Many of the recommendations from the November 2006 report of the Washington Learn steering committee are implemented.
- It is organized by early learning, K-12, and higher education provisions.

---

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** In 2005, the Legislature created a steering committee (Washington Learns) comprised of legislators, the Governor, and others, and three sector advisory committees on which legislators and others served. The steering and advisory committees were directed to conduct a comprehensive study of early learning, K-12, and higher education; to develop recommendations on how the state can best provide stable funding for early learning, public schools, and public colleges and universities; and to develop recommendations on specified policy issues. The steering committee submitted an interim and a final report with recommendations to the Legislature.

**Summary of Bill:** Many of the recommendations from the November 2006 report of the Washington Learns steering committee are implemented. It is organized by early learning, K-12, and higher education provisions.

**Early Learning:** An Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) is established to advise the Department of Early Learning (DEL) on statewide early learning needs and to work with the DEL to develop a statewide early learning plan. The ELAC may have up to 25 members with specified representation, including legislators.

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Subject to funding, the DEL must implement a five-star voluntary rating system for licensed or certified child care centers and homes, and early education programs to provide information to parents about the quality of programs and increase the quality of early learning programs. When a data system is developed, the DEL must provide parents with timely inspection and complaint information about child care and early learning programs.

The DEL must work collaboratively with a private-public partner (Thrive-by-Five) and actively seek public and private funds for the partnership. The duties of the Thrive-by-Five include: (1) enhancing parent education and support; (2) accepting and spending funds for quality improvement initiatives; (3) assisting local partnerships; (4) assisting the state-wide movement to high quality early learning, and (5) supporting parents as a child's first and best teacher.

The DEL must review and revise child care provider rules to encourage mutual respect; clearly focus on children's safety; and focus on improving early learning outcomes.

K-12 Education: The goal of the Basic Education Act for public schools is expanded to include the development of a public school system that focuses more on educational performance of students and includes high expectations for all students.

Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, funding for phasing-in voluntary all-day kindergarten is required, beginning with the schools with the highest percentages of students qualifying for a free or reduced lunch. The funds must be used to support students that qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program. Program requirements are specified, including providing at least one thousand instructional hours, providing a rich curriculum, and having connections with community early learning programs and parents.

Ten demonstration projects, selected by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) based on criteria provided, will implement a comprehensive kindergarten through grade three foundation learning program. The resources provided for the program will be used to implement full-day kindergarten, class sizes of 18 students to one teacher, and the use of an instructional coach. At least two of the demonstration projects must be in schools participating in the Thrive-by-Five early learning partnerships in the Highline and Yakima school districts. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) will evaluate the projects, make recommendations for continued implementation and expansion of the program, and report to the Legislature in November 2008 and December 2009. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, all school districts must consider using increases in Initiative 728 funding for reducing primary grade class sizes.

Ten English as a Second Language demonstration projects will be used to develop recommendations regarding competencies for teachers to be included in teacher preparation programs, professional development, and in job-embedded practices. WSIPP will conduct a literature review, a field study, and a project. The field study will be of an ongoing project in schools and school districts where Spanish is the predominate language other than English. The project will provide professional development and planning time in three schools, selected by SPI, where there are many first languages among the students. WSIPP must report in November 2008 and December 2009.

A health-related career academies competitive start-up grant program is created. The grants are to be used to start health-related pathways that result in students acquiring preparation and certification to enter the workforce or to continue their education or training. Academy programs must include high school and school district staff, public & private institutions of higher education, employers, industry and labor associations, and philanthropic organizations. The grant program will be administered by a non-profit health organization.

The after-school mathematics support program is created. SPI will provide grants to selected community-based, nonprofit organizations that have an existing after-school program that includes support to students in learning mathematics. Priority will be given to programs serving middle school students. SPI must evaluate program outcomes and provide recommendations on program continuation, modification, and expansion in reports due November 2008 and December 2009.

SPI must develop a mathematics and science instructional coach project to support classroom teachers. The project will include an instructional coach development institute, coaching seminars, and provide coaching activities in schools. Coach characteristics and the role of the instructional coach are specified. WSIPP will evaluate the project and report findings by November 2008 and December 2009.

The State Board of Education (SBE) must complete an independent review of mathematics and science standards, which will address the inclusion of international performance standards. Additionally, SBE must identify basic math and science curriculum and, as part of the state accountability plan, identify when school districts would be required to use one of the identified curricula. SBE must also revise the high school math graduation requirements to include a minimum of three credits for mathematics and must consider additional changes, including defining the content within the three credits to include Algebra II.

Several targeted mathematics and science teacher professional development programs are authorized with expected outcomes listed. SPI and the educational service districts (ESDs) must partner to deliver the professional development. Specific uses of the professional development resources are identified for fourth and fifth grade teachers, middle school teachers, and high school math and science teachers.

A public-private partnership is established to develop, pilot, and implement the Washington State Leadership Academy. The board of directors of the academy must make recommendations for changes in superintendent and principal preparation programs, the administrator licensure system, and continuing education requirements.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) must do the following within specified timelines: adopt new math knowledge and skill standards for all individuals seeking an initial teaching certificate; adopt new teacher certification requirements addressing mathematics content for elementary or middle school teachers and high school mathematics teachers; develop a uniform, external professional-level teacher certification assessment; and review and revise teacher preparation program requirements.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification bonus is established in statute and is increased from an annual amount of \$3,500 for the life of the 10-year certificate to an annual amount of 10 percent of a teacher's base salary for the life of

the 10-year certificate. An additional bonus of \$5,000 is available for individuals with NBPTS certification who teach in a high poverty school; and an additional bonus of \$5,000 is available for individuals that hold a middle or high school math or science NBPTS certificate and teach in a high poverty school.

Two new conditional loan programs are created: (1) The Pipeline for Para-educators Program, to enable a para-educator with three years of experience to complete a two-year degree and then enter an alternative route program to obtain a math and special education endorsement or a math and English as a Second Language endorsement. The annual conditional scholarship must not exceed \$4,000; (2) The Retooling to Teach Math and Science program, to enable current individuals with a teaching certificate to obtain a math or science endorsement. The annual scholarship must not exceed \$3,000. The condition for both programs is two years of teaching for every one year of scholarship. If recipients of the scholarships fail to teach then the individual must repay the remaining loan principal with interest. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) will administer these programs with the funds coming from the Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship account.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is directed to lead a committee to develop recommendations for a comprehensive expertise and incentive pay structure for K-12 staff. The OFM director is the chair, and other members include four legislators, SPI, PESB, educator associations, and business representatives. Recommendations are due December 2008.

SPI and OFM must develop six measures of financial health and a financial health outlook rating system that places school districts in one of three financial health categories based on the district's ratings on the six measures. The measures must be presented to the Governor by November 2007. If the Governor and SPI agree, then the system will be implemented in the 2008-09 school year. The financial health rating category of each school district will be published annually. ESDs and SPI will provide technical assistance for districts depending on the district's category. SPI must submit an implementation progress report by November 2007.

Higher Education: The Washington Learns Scholarship program is established to cover the cost of tuition, fees, books and materials for up to five years for students from low-income families and students from families in which neither parent attained a baccalaureate degree (also known as "first generation college students"). Such students enter the program when in seventh or eighth grade by signing a pledge to graduate from high school with at least a "C" grade point average and have no felony convictions. If the student meets this criteria and if the student's family has an income at or below the state median family income in the year preceding college attendance, then the student may receive a scholarship. SPI and the HECB are given duties to implement the program.

The GET Ready for Math and Science Scholarship program is established to cover the cost of tuition and fees for up to four years for students who achieve level four on the math or science Washington Assessment of Student Learning in 10th grade. Students must enter a math or science related degree program in college. The student's family income may not exceed 125 percent of median family income. SPI and the HECB are given duties to implement the program.

The Regional Opportunity Grant program is established to cover up to 45 credits (and the cost of required books and materials) in a community and technical college workforce training program that prepares the student for a high demand occupation. The student's family income must be at or below the state median family income. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the HECB are given duties to implement the program.

The State Need Grant program is changed to permit students who take at least three credits, instead of at least six credits, receive a need grant, if they are eligible based on their income.

A state goal to increase funding at our state colleges and universities to at least the 60th percentile of comparable institutions in the Global Challenge States within 10 years is provided. OFM must report on the progress made toward the state goal. Additionally, tuition increases at each institution is limited to no more than 7 percent per year. Institutions must report the full cost of instruction, the amount collected from student tuition and fees, and the difference between the amounts for the full cost of instruction and student tuition and fees.

Several administrative changes for the HECB are made. Instead of the HECB employing a director, the Governor will appoint the executive director of the HECB, from a list of three names submitted by the HECB. The date when the four-year colleges and universities must submit budget outlines to the HECB is moved from August 1 to July 1. The date when the HECB must submit its budget recommendation to OFM is moved from November 1 to October 1. The advisory council, which was required to meet with the HECB at least quarterly to advise the HECB, is repealed.

An education data center is established at OFM. The center will work with state boards, state agencies, and colleges and universities to collect and analyze education data from early learning through higher education. One of the many duties of the center is to assist other education boards and agencies as they establish educational benchmarks for Washington compared to the Global Challenge States. A definition of the Global Challenge States is provided. At least once every five years OFM must determine whether there should be changes to the list of states and report its findings. OFM and SPI must review the teacher pay systems in the Global Challenge States and develop a methodology for comparing teacher salaries among the Global Challenge States. OFM must report the findings of the review by January 2008.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 22, 2007.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** Yes.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for Sections 501 and 1302, which have an emergency clause and take effect immediately.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This bill addresses the policies that were recommended by Washington Learns and are funded in the Governor's budget to change the education system and invest in all students to be successful in life. This is how the system should be changed to change the results for positive outcomes. The package has five main themes: (1) invest in the quality of early learning education to get children ready to learn in school; (2) math and science, which is the international language and allows us to compete in

the global society; (3) personalized learning, a recognition that not every child learns the same way and, if we personalize, we give each child a better chance to succeed; (4) college and workforce training, which is necessary to get ahead in the world today and is very different than it used to be; and (5) accountability, to ensure that we get the results we want. We support the emphasis on math and science. We especially support the pre-engineering curriculum. We support the National Board bonuses. We support a menu of curriculum to assist districts in finding what works with students. We support the leadership academy because we need to have leaders leading the schools to better achievement. This bill broadens our approach and sets out a good roadmap for our future. We appreciate broadening the goal of basic education. The SBE likes the idea of quarterly results and have started the review of the math EALRs and hope to review science this summer. ESDs are supportive of the role given to them and applaud putting the duties in their core funding. We support increasing compensation for early learning professionals, and increasing the quality and access to early learning. Early learning has pioneered student-centered learning. This is the kind of comprehensive and visionary approach we need across the education system, including higher education. Support the effort to close the funding gap in higher education and our peers. We support the scholarships provided in the bill.

OTHER: The Governor's efforts are appreciated, but this bill does not go far enough and we need to go as far as possible to improve funding for schools since there have been many years of neglect. The timelines should be shorter. We cannot wait ten years for some of these things to happen. We do not believe districts should be limited on which curriculum they should use. We are opposed to the state mandating which curriculum school districts might use. Selecting math and science teachers for bonuses is not a good idea because teaching is and should be collegial and work as a team. Selective bonuses will not encourage teamwork. We do not support the instructional coaching program in the bill because it ties our hands. What we really need is a good diagnostic assessment system and a data system so we can make good decisions that will help our students. Our top priority is to get stable funding and a new funding formula for basic education and not these many things highlighted in the Governor's budget. We feel schools and the people in them are accountable now. We should fully fund education before we are held accountable for things that we do not have the resources to accomplish. We recommend that more intentional thought be given to special education students, including credit for related service or other incentives for paraprofessionals that work with the special education students. The private providers of early learning should be included in the bill. The voluntary quality improvement and rating system must be funded to make it work. The subsidy provided to early learning providers should reflect the market rates but it does not now.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Christine Gregoire, Governor; Dr. Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals; Marc Frasier, Washington Roundtable; Linda Hanson, Washington State Parent Teacher Association; Edie Harding, State Board of Education; Bill Keim, Educational Service Districts; Mitch Denning, Alliance of Education Associations; Lorraine Wilson, Sondra Bright, Tacoma School District; Kursten Holabird, Service Employees International Union; Mary Alice Grobins, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges; Terry Teale, Council of Presidents; Marcus Riccelli, Chris Reigelsperger, Washington Student Lobby;

Nancy Atwood, American Electronics Association; Agda Burchard, Washington Association for the Education of Young Children.

OTHER: Charles Hasse, Washington Education Association; Barbara Mertens, Washington Association of School Administrators; Dan Steele, Washington State School Directors Association; Christy Perkins, Washington State Special Education Coalition; Judy Jennings, Washington Federation of Independent Schools.